

Floods and Agriculture

Preparing for a Flood or Flash Flood on Your Farm

- Create an emergency plan of action, considering such things as areas of high ground for animal relocation, temporary milking facilities, equipment relocation, and safe pesticide storage.
- Be sure cattle are properly immunized before being exposed to floodwaters.
- Make arrangements for emergency milk pickup.
- Have a plan for moving grain out of the reach of floodwaters.
- In broad, level floodplains where floodwaters are seldom deeper than 3 or 4 feet, a mound of soil can be constructed on which livestock can stay until floodwaters recede. Try to locate the mounds where they will not be washed away by fast-flowing water.
- Provide riprap on banks of earthen manure storages where flowing water may erode berms.

When a Flood or Flash Flood Watch or Warning Is Issued

- Move machinery, feed, grain, pesticides, and herbicides to a higher elevation.
- Tie down lumber, logs, irrigation pipes, fuel tanks, and other loose equipment or materials.
- To keep surface water out of your well, use such materials as heavy plastic and duct tape to seal the well cap and top of the well casing.
- Disconnect electric power to all buildings that may be flooded.

During a Flood or Flash Flood Event

- If water is rising, try to drive stock through water free of obstructions. Grazing animals swim well, except when they encounter fences and swift currents.
- Block off narrow passageways where animals would be unable to turn around.
- Leave building doors and windows open at least 2 inches to equalize pressure and help prevent buildings from shifting.
- Provide feed and water to livestock. If water is not provided, thirsty animals will try to break out to get to floodwaters.

Adapted from resource material developed by the University of Wisconsin Extension Service entitled "The Disaster Handbook for Extension Agents"